**CHAPTER 1**

**Overview of Canadian Politics**

**Multiple Choice Questions**

1. What is a system of government in which the decision-makers are chosen by the citizens in free and fair elections known as:

a) Autocracy

b) Monarchy

c) Democracy

d) Oligarchy

1. Canadian politics is shaped primarily by which three cleavages?

a) Language, generation, gender

b) Territory, wealth, religion

c) Education, health, housing

d) Geography, ethnicity, ideology

1. With respect to multiculturalism, Canada is often referred to as:

a) A mosaic

b) A melting pot

c) A nation-state

d) A bi-cultural community

1. The legal concept that defines the supremacy of the monarch over the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government is known as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a) federalism

b) rule of law

c) liberalism

d) the Crown

1. What is settler colonialism?

a) The belief that Indigenous institutions, beliefs, practices, and systems of knowledge are superior to those of European settlers

b) The belief in the supremacy of European institutions, customs, and beliefs over those of Indigenous populations

c) The belief that Central Canadian institutions, customs, and beliefs are superior to those of Western Canada

d) The belief that Western Canadian institutions, customs, and beliefs are superior to those of Atlantic Canada

1. Which of the following statements regarding the federal government’s White Paper on Indian Policy (1969) is true?

a) It signalled the intention to dismantle the Indian Act in an effort to assimilate First Nations people into the predominantly European society

b) The Prime Minister argued that converting reserve land to private property and extinguishing treaties would result in fairer treatment of Indigenous people

c) The White Paper faced heavy opposition from Indigenous communities and was ultimately abandoned

d) All of the above

1. The left side of the political spectrum in Canada is typically associated with which political party?

a) Bloc Québécois

b) Liberal Party

c) Conservative Party

d) NDP

1. Many Indigenous peoples refer to North America as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a) Beaver Island

b) Turtle Rock

c) Turtle Island

d) Sparrow Bridge

1. The political tendency that tends to favour lower taxes and a smaller role for the government while supporting traditional social values is found at which end of the political spectrum?

a) Left-wing

b) Top end

c) Right-wing

d) Centre

1. The Idle No More movement is a protest movement that calls upon the federal government to do which of the following?

a) Respect the treaty rights of Indigenous peoples

b) Reform environmental legislation to set stricter limits in greenhouse gas emissions

c) Increase Canada’s commitment to NATO peacekeeping missions

d) None of the above

1. Canadian political institutions have been most heavily influenced by which two countries?

a) United States and France

b) United Kingdom and United States

c) United Kingdom and France

d) Australia and New Zealand

1. Which of the following statements can be applied to the Canadian political system?

a) The government is led by a first minister and a cabinet

b) There is a constitutional monarch, whose representatives exercise power on the advice of first ministers

c) There is a judiciary independent from government influence

d) All of the above

1. Confederation occurred in what year?

a) 1776

b) 1967

c) 1867

d) 1982

1. Passed by the British Parliament in 1867, which of the following became Canada’s central constitutional document?

a) British North America Act

b) Statute of Westminster

c) Indian Act

d) Quebec Act

1. In 1949, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ replaced the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as the highest court of appeal in Canada.

a) Supreme Court of Canada; Supreme Court of the United Kingdom

b) Superior Court of Quebec; Superior Court of Ontario

c) Supreme Court of the United Kingdom; Judicial Committee of the Privy Council

d) Supreme Court of Canada; Judicial Committee of the Privy Council

1. Before the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s, what was the central political and social institution in Quebec?

a) National Assembly

b) Quebec City Hall

c) Church of England

d) Catholic Church

1. The Canadian constitution was patriated in what year?

a) 1867

b) 1967

c) 1995

d) 1982

1. What is the portion of the Canadian constitution that enshrines the core liberties, entitlements, and rights of citizens called?

a) The Canadian Bill of Rights

b) The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

c) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

d) The British North America Act

1. After the negotiations of the 1970s and early-1980s, the new constitution received support from nearly all provincial governments except which one?

a) Quebec

b) Newfoundland

c) Ontario

d) Alberta

1. The Constitution Act, 1982, contained which two important additions?

a) The Indian Act and an amending formula

b) A “distinct society” clause for Quebec and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

c) The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and an amending formula

d) The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the North American Free Trade Agreement

1. Which federal transfer program is designed to lessen fiscal disparities among the provinces?

a) Centralization

b) Liberalization

c) Stabilization

d) Equalization

1. What was the decline in the international economy that began in 2008, known as the Great Recession, triggered by?

a) 9/11

b) The collapse of the U.S. housing market

c) The signing of the Canada-US-Mexico Trade Agreement

d) The Quiet Revolution

1. Which of the following is not a major cleavage in Canadian politics?

a) Geography

b) Demography

c) Ideology

d) Class

1. In which era of Canadian politics do the courts become a site for political conflict due to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

a) The First Era (1867 to early 1900s)

b) The Second Era (mid-1900s to late 1900s)

c) The Third Era (late 1900s to early 2000s)

d) Before the First Era

1. What was the purpose of the federal government’s White Paper in 1969?

a) To ensure that Quebec would remain in Canada

b) To dismantle the Indian Act and assimilate Indigenous People

c) To facilitate stronger trade relations with the United States

d) To address growing concerns about climate change

1. How many sovereign governments exist within the Canadian federation?

a) 1

b) 10

c) 11

d) 14

27. Which of the following statements about Canadian politics is false?

a) Canada is governed by the rule of law.

b) The federal government created the ten provincial governments in 1867.

c) Indigenous people have unique rights.

d) The executive is responsible to the legislative branch.

28. The “mosaic” metaphor is used to describe:

a) federalism in Canada

b) the justice system in Canada

c) multiculturalism in Canada

d) elections in Canada

29. Ideology is:

a) a belief system that defines the way power should be exercised and distributed

b) a governing system that divides power between elected and non-elected officials

c) a governing system that divides power among different orders of government

d) None of the above

30. Left-wing thinkers value:

a) policies that achieve equality for all Canadians

b) a substantial role for government in society and the economy

c) restrictions on law enforcement and military action

d) All of the above

31. Which party is most consistently associated with straddling the political centre?

a) The New Democratic Party

b) The Liberal Party

c) The Conservative Party

d) The Bloc Quebecois

32. Which of the following is *not* an element of right-wing thinking?

a) lower taxes and debt reduction

b) conformity to traditional social norms

c) support for group rights protections

d) assertive policies for police and military intervention

33. The term “small-l liberal” refers to:

a) a person who supports a particular political party

b) a proponent of equal opportunity

c) a person who votes for a particular political party

d) a libertarian

34. Which of the following political characteristics did Canada *not* inherit from Britain?

a) common law traditions

b) Westminster parliamentary traditions

c) the left/right ideological spectrum

d) federalism

35. Over time, Canada has been shifting out of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ orbit and into the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ one.

a) American; global

b) British; American

c) French; Russian

d) British; French

36. Which of the following events occurred prior to Confederation?

a) a royal proclamation recognized the self-governing status of First Nations

b) the Northwest Uprisings pushed for Indigenous rights in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories

c) World War I

d) the Quiet Revolution

37. Responsible government means:

a) the prime minister is directly responsible to Canadians

b) the federal government must balance its budget

c) the first minister and cabinet are accountable to the legislature

d) politicians must abide by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

38. Which of the following lasted the longest?

a) the Second World War

b) the Great Depression

c) the residential schools system

d) the mega-constitutional negotiations

39. Which of the following is a reflection of settler colonialism?

a) the Indian Act

b) the residential schools system

c) the hanging of Louis Riel

d) All of the above

40. Which of the following developments occurred most recently?

a) patriation

b) Confederation

c) Truth and Reconciliation Commission

d) Statute of Westminster

41. Which party has governed Canada at the federal level longer than any other party?

a) New Democratic Party

b) Liberal Party

c) Conservative Party

d) Confederation of Regions

42. Which period featured the adoption of the maple leaf flag, the White Paper on Indian Policy, and the Quiet Revolution?

a) the pre-Confederation period

b) the First Era (1867 to early-20th century)

c) the Second Era (mid- to late-20th century)

d) the Third Era (the 21st century)

43. In general, colonial settlement of Canada followed which pattern?

a) west to east

b) east to west

c) north to south

d) coasts to centre

44. Which development is most closely associated with the concept of “cultural genocide”?

a) patriation

b) Confederation

c) residential schools system

d) equalization

45. The debates over the Canadian flag featured conflict between:

a) older Canadians and younger Canadians

b) different regions

c) men and women

d) republicans and monarchists

46. The constitutional patriation process involved:

a) the entrenchment of a Charter of Rights and Freedoms

b) ending the residential schools system

c) abolishing the unelected senate

d) all of the above

47. Which of the following has *not* been part of the federal government’s approach to reconciliation?

a) an apology for the residential schools system

b) the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission

c) a pledge to dismantle the Indian Act

d) the establishment of a constitutional third order of government to represent Indigenous peoples

48. A division that separates opposing political communities is:

a) a cleavage

b) a mosaic

c) a recession

d) a depression

49. What is the portion of the constitution that enshrines Canadians’ liberties and entitlements vis-à-vis their governments?

a) the principle of responsible government

b) the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

c) the Bill of Rights

d) the equalization formula

50. Which of the following symbols was not in serious consideration by the Pearson government for inclusion in the Canadian flag?

a) the fleur-de-lis

b) the eagle feather

c) the union jack

d) the maple leaf

**True or False Questions**

1. Citizens choose leaders through free and fair elections in a democracy.

1. Historically, Canada has incorporated institutions and practices from both Great Britain and the United States into its political landscape.
2. From the United States, Canada has inherited its common law and the parliamentary traditions that make it a representative democracy.
3. The four original provinces in Confederation were Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia.
4. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 established the Indian band system in what is now Canada.

1. The New Democratic Party has never formed government at the federal level in Canada.

1. National identity and national unity became the focus of Canadian politics as the country entered the post-war period.
2. The British North America Act, 1867, incorporated an amending formula, or a set of rules that govern how the constitution can be changed.
3. Canada borrowed the federal principle, in part, from the United States.

1. Two key outcomes of the Quiet Revolution were the displacement of the Catholic Church as the central institution in Quebec society and the creation of some of the country’s most progressive social programs.
2. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a part of the Constitution Act, 1982.
3. Settler colonialism, gender, and class have achieved long-term salience as the most prominent cleavages in Canadian politics.
4. In Canada, the political left tends to want restrictions on law enforcement and military action.
5. Over time, Canadian politics has been shifting out the American sphere of influence and into the British one.
6. The decline in the international economy that began in 2008, triggered by the collapse of the U.S. housing market, is known as the Great Recession.
7. The federal government’s White Paper on Indian Policy, 1969, sought to assimilate First Nations people into the broader, predominantly European society by dismantling the Indian Act.
8. Canada has a self-image as a multicultural mosaic.

1. The prime minister is elected directly by the people of Canada.
2. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission brought an end to settler colonialism in Canada.

1. Right-wingers want government to be active in promoting the public good through expansive social programs and state control of the economy.
2. Left-wing ideology advocates for lower taxes and debt reduction.
3. The term “distinct society” refers to the unique cultural impact of Canada’s Indigenous Peoples.
4. Canada is governed by the rule of law, which means that all Canadians are subject to the same legal treatment regardless of their status.
5. The Canadian federation consists of 11 sovereign governments.
6. The arrival of responsible government in Canada meant that the Crown’s role was removed from the constitution.
7. According to some historians, Indigenous institutions, like those of the Haudenosaunee, served as models for settler governments when it came to advancing cultural accommodation.

1. Canadian democracy has always been conducted along geographic lines.
2. Feminism transcends left-wing thinking; some people on the political right support feminist values.
3. The Conservative Party of Canada has been in power in Ottawa more than any other party.
4. The forces of decentralization ensure that the federal government has the authority to devise and impose common standards for essential programs like health care.

**Short Answer Questions**

1. Identify four key dimensions that differentiate left- and right-wing ideology in Canada.

1. What are two important features of the British North America Act, 1867?
2. Explain the significance of the Indian Act, 1876, and briefly identify how its legacy is still experienced today.
3. Is Canada’s political system highly centralized or highly decentralized? Provide an example to support your position.
4. Identify and state the significance of the Quiet Revolution.
5. What was the purpose of the White Paper on Indian Policy, 1969, and what was the response from Indigenous leaders and communities at the time?

1. Describe at least four of the core institutional features of the Canadian political system.

1. Explain how Canada’s geography defines its politics.
2. On the topic of feminism, how do the left-wing and right-wing differ?
3. Situate the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, and the New Democratic Party on the left-right political spectrum.
4. Why was the Royal Proclamation of 1763 a turning point in modern Canadian history?

1. What is meant by the term “jurisdiction” and how does it factor into Canadian politics?
2. What are some of the ways that American influence is felt in Canadian politics?
3. What new geographic divisions have emerged during the Third Era (late 1900s-early 2000s) of Canadian politics?
4. What are the differences between small-l and big-L Liberals and small-c and Big-C Conservatives?

**Essay Questions**

1. Canadian politics is often understood in terms of cleavages. Identify and explain the core cleavages that have been most salient in Canada’s political development. How do these cleavages impact political decision-making in Canada, and why might they overshadow others?
2. How are Canada’s historical connections with both Great Britain and the United States still significant to Canadian politics today?
3. Given what you have read to this point, should Indigenous politics be treated as a separate component of Canadian politics (e.g., as a separate chapter in a textbook)? Or should Indigenous politics be taught as an integral part of all elements of Canadian politics (e.g., woven through each chapter of the textbook)? Defend your response with examples.

**Answer Key**

**Multiple Choice Questions**

1. C
2. D
3. A
4. D
5. B
6. D
7. D
8. B
9. C
10. A
11. B
12. D
13. C
14. A
15. D
16. D
17. D
18. B
19. A
20. C
21. D
22. B
23. D
24. C
25. B
26. C
27. B
28. C
29. A
30. D
31. B
32. C
33. B
34. D
35. B
36. A
37. C
38. C
39. D
40. C
41. B
42. C
43. B
44. C
45. B
46. A
47. D
48. A
49. B
50. B

**True or False Questions**

1. T
2. T
3. F
4. F
5. F
6. T
7. T
8. F
9. T
10. T
11. T
12. F
13. T
14. F
15. T
16. T
17. T
18. F
19. F
20. F
21. F
22. F
23. T
24. T
25. F
26. T
27. T
28. T
29. F
30. F

**Short Answer Questions**

1. Left- and right-wing ideologies are distinct in terms of how they treat fiscal matters, how they treat institutional change, how they treat social matters, and how they view law enforcement and the military.

1. Important features of the BNA Act include specifying the roles of the Crown, the political executive, and Parliament. The BNA Act also divided power among the federal and provincial governments.
2. The Act defined Indigenous people in Canada as an area of policy responsibility to be controlled and managed by the federal government; the law marginalized them with the establishment of reserves and rejected their inherent rights to self-governance. In terms of the legacy, vast socioeconomic and political disparities persist between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people in Canada. The Indian Act remains in place at the time of writing, although the Trudeau government has promised to repeal it.
3. Canada’s system is highly decentralized. Examples include a lack of a national department of education, and 14 healthcare systems instead of a federal system.

1. The Quiet Revolution refers to the sweeping changes that occurred in Quebec in the 1960s. The Catholic Church was replaced by the provincial government as the central institution in Quebec society, allowing for the development of some of the country’s most progressive social programs.
2. The federal White Paper on Indian Policy, 1969, outlined the government’s intention to dismantle the Indian Act and subsequently assimilate First Nations people into the broader, predominantly European society. This shift in approach sparked opposition from Indigenous leaders and mobilized Indigenous people on both a regional and national level.
3. Some of the major core institutional features of the Canadian political system include: 1) the rule of law (all Canadians subject to the same treatment regardless of their status); 2) that Canada is a constitutional monarchy (ultimate power rests with the Queen); 3) the head of government is the leader of the party that controls the legislature; 4) the first minister and their ministers are known as cabinet and dominate the political executive; 5) the political executive must maintain control of the legislature to remain in power (responsible government); 6) federal parliament consisting of two bodies (the House of Commons and the Senate); 7) the provinces and territories are unicameral (no Senate); 8) cabinet ministers are individually responsible for the activities of their ministry and collectively accountable to the legislature; 9) that Canada is a representative democracy; 10) that Canadian political systems are characterized by party discipline; 11) that the legislature is adversarial; and 12) that governments are supported by a non-partisan civil service.

1. Federal elections consist of over 300 individual races across Canada. Senate seats are allocated by province. There are distinct regional/ provincial political cultures. Strong provincial governments keep Canadian federalism decentralized.
2. Feminism is often seen as a left-leaning ideology; however, feminism can transcend a left-right divide. Those on the right may believe that women should be treated equally to men as individuals but are opposed to any special treatment for women as a group.
3. The New Democratic Party spans the left to the centre-left of the political spectrum, the Liberal Party spans the centre-left to the centre-right, and the Conservative Party spans the centre-right to the right of the political spectrum.
4. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 served as a foundation for Canada’s constitutional order, recognizing the self-governing status of Indigenous Peoples and establishing a nation-to-nation relationship with them and the British Crown. Despite this, it declared British sovereignty over the land. The Royal Proclamation also sought to impose British laws and institutions on Quebec, which were not well received.

1. Jurisdiction refers to the ultimate authority to make political decisions, or the seat of power for such decision-making. In Canadian politics, there are eleven governments with their own areas of jurisdiction (10 provinces and the federal government), each of whom have decision-making authority in certain areas.
2. From the United States, Canada borrows the federal principle that involves dividing power among a common central government and a series of regional ones. The federal Bill of Rights, 1960, and later the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, imported elements of the American Bill of Rights and brought more American-style litigiousness and judicial lawmaking to Canadian politics. Canadian political strategists borrow heavily from American-style campaign strategies and political marketing techniques.
3. The rural-urban-suburban cleavage has replaced region-to-region (e.g., east/west) divisions in the Third Era. Rural Canadians tend to be more conservative and urban Canadians more progressive.
4. Big L- Liberals refers to the Liberal Party or someone who identifies as a Liberal partisan, whereas small-l liberal refers to the ideology of liberalism, which generally is a belief system that promotes equality of opportunity. Similarly, big-C Conservative refers to the Conservative Party or a Conservative partisan, while small-c conservative refers to the ideology of conservatism, which generally combines the worldviews of individualism and traditionalism.

**Essay Questions**

1. The response should incorporate definitions of each of the three main cleavages (geography, demography, and ideology). Students should note how these cleavages have helped shape -- and are reinforced by – various political institutions in Canada (e.g., geography and federalism or the electoral system). Students should discuss why the entrenchment of these three cleavages in the institutions of the Canadian state leaves little room for others (e.g., class or generation).

2. From Britain, Canada has inherited its common-law and Westminster parliamentary traditions, and Canada remains a representative democracy with a government led by a prime minister and cabinet who are supported in the House of Commons by a majority of elected officials. Canada is also a constitutional monarchy, meaning that the Crown (shared with Britain) is the official head of state and exercises power on the advice of the prime minister. The majority of constitutional laws governing Canadian democracy are imbued with British statutes, traditions, and conventions. Canadian politics owes its core ideological foundations to the British model. The dominance of conservatism, liberalism, and social democracy across the Canadian political spectrum is a by-product of Canada’s close historical relationship with Britain.

From the United States, Canada has adopted the principle of federalism which involves dividing powers among a common central government and a series of provincial ones. The American influence can also be seen in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Some have suggested that the Charter shares some similarities with the American Bill of Rights, and have also noted that the American tendency towards litigiousness and judicial lawmaking has steadily crept into the Canadian political landscape since the 1980s.

3. Treating Indigenous politics as a separate component instead of an integral part of Canadian politics may de-emphasize the parallels between Indigenous and non-Indigenous politics, particularly on issues like diversity, representation, activism, and governance. Differentiation limits one’s ability to draw connections and lessons that are common and valuable to understanding Canadian politics as a whole. For example, if they are woven together, discussions on justice systems can focus on both Canadian institutions as well as Indigenous institutions and practices. However, it can also be argued that treating the two sides separately draws attention to the deep disparities and divisions between them.